

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-13
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5362
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: TECH, AR
SUBJECT: ARGENTINA MOVING AHEAD AS NUCLEAR SUPPLIER IN LATIN
AMERICA

1. CNEA PRESIDENT CARLOS CASTRO MADERO RETURNED TO BUENOS AIRES
LAST FRIDAY FROM BOLIVIA WHERE HE SIGNED AN AGREEMENT FOR NUCLEAR
COOPERATION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE AGREEMENT INCLUDES
THE PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION OF A NUCLEAR RESEARCH REACTOR TO
BE LOCATED AT THE FUTURE SITE OF THE BOLIVIAN CENTER FOR NUCLEAR
INVESTIGATION IN VIACHA ABOUT 70 KILOMETERS FROM LA PAZ. THE
AGREEMENT ALSO ENVISIONS ARGENTINA PROVIDING TECHNOLOGY AND
EQUIPMENT FOR THE BOLIVIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAM.

2. IT WAS INDICATED AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT THAT BOLIVIA
POSSESSED IMPORTANT RADIOACTIVE MINERAL RESOURCES THAT COULD
EVENTUALLY BE EXTRACTED FOR USE IN THE NUCLEAR PROGRAM. IN
ADDITION, BOLIVIA HAD RECEIVED, THROUGH A SPECIAL AGREEMENT WITH
THE U.S., THE TRANSFER OF SOME U.S. EQUIPMENT TO BE INSTALLED IN
A SMALL NUCLEAR RESEARCH PLANT.

3. CASTRO MADERO INDICATED THAT THE AGREEMENT WITH BOLIVIA
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IS QUITE SIMILAR TO THE ONE WITH PERU. THEY WERE ALSO
STUDYING THE POSSIBILITY OF A NUCLEAR POWER INSTALLATION
SOMETIME IN THE FUTURE.

4. COMMENT: WITH THIS LATEST AGREEMENT BETWEEN BOLIVIA AND
ARGENTINA FOR NUCLEAR COOPERATION, CNEA IS FOLLOWING A
STRATEGY FORMULATED SEVERAL YEARS AGO OF OPENING THE WAY

IN LATIN AMERICA FOR ARGENTINA TO BECOME A PRINCIPAL NUCLEAR SUPPLIER. THIS CAN BE SEEN IN THE S&T ACCORD (INCLUDING NUCLEAR COOPERATION) WITH ECUADOR WHERE CASTRO MADERO VISITED SEVERAL WEEKS AGO; THE AGREEMENT SIGNED A YEAR AGO WITH PERU AND NOW THE AGREEMENT WITH BOLIVIA.

5. ARGENTINE NUCLEAR EXPERTS HAVE ALSO BEEN WORKING IN URUGUAY FOR THE PAST FEW MONTHS ON THE U.S. SUPPLIES ZERO POWER REACTOR. THIS REACTOR WAS MADE CRITICAL LAST MONDAY ACCORDING TO A CNEA PHYSICIST WHO JUST RETURNED FROM URUGUAY. OTHER NEGOTIATIONS WITH URUGUAY ARE UNDERWAY TO PROVIDE AN EXPERIMENTAL REACTOR.

6. A NEW NUCLEAR ISOTOPE PLANT THAT WAS INAUGURATED BY CNEA AT EZEIZA ATOMIC CENTER LAST MONTH, WHICH WAS TOTALLY DESIGNED AND EXECUTED BY CNEA EXPERTS, ALSO ENABLES ARGENTINA THE EXPERIENCE TO PROVIDE ASSISTANCE TO OTHER COUNTRIES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SIMILAR FACILITIES.

7. IN ITS READINESS TO SIGN A NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH BOLIVIA HOWEVER WE BELIEVE ARGENTINA HAD MORE IN MIND THAN ITS OVERALL AREA NUCLEAR POLICY. THE AGREEMENT FORMS PART OF A CAMPAIGN HAVING AS AN AIM SOLIDIFYING FRIENDSHIPS WITH CHILE'S NEIGHBORS AND ADVERSARIES. FOREIGN MINISTER MONTES UNDERLINED ARGENTINA'S SUPPORT FOR BOLIVIA'S RECEIVING AN OUTLET TO THE SEA IN A SPEECH ON APRIL 10, AND THE PRESS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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GAVE CONSIDERABLE COVERAGE LAST WEEKEND TO ARGENTINA'S HAVING CONSIDERABLY AUGMENTED "FREE ZONE" SPACE IN THE PORT OF ROSARIO FOR GOODS TRANSITING ARGENTINA TO OR FROM BOLIVIA. SIMILARLY THE PRESS HIGHLIGHTED GOA'S HAVING PUT FINAL TOUCHES ON TWO AGREEMENTS -- ONE ECONOMIC, THE OTHER INDUSTRIAL -- WHICH HAD BEEN SIGNED WITH BOLIVIA ORIGINALLY IN OCTOBER OF 1976.
CASTRO

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